



## Bishop's Column

Despite the fact that the Christmas and New Year holidays were a little bit longer this year – the bank holidays were transferred from the weekend to the Monday and Tuesday, then for New Year to the Monday – the Church likes to move us on quite swiftly.

No sooner have we got ourselves settled in the straw of the stable at Bethlehem than we are whisked into the New Year.

And we begin the New Year in honour of the Blessed Virgin Mary, now not just the young mother of the newly born infant Jesus, but also as Mother of the Church. Then the Feast of the Epiphany (January 6) reminds us that Jesus, the Father's gift to us, as well as being our Lord and King, our High Priest, is also destined to die for us that we might live fully the life of the Trinity.

The Feast of the Baptism (January 9) ends the Christmas Cycle. On this feast we witness the beginning of Christ's public life as an adult. In the waters of the Jordan River, the Father affirms Jesus as his only Son, the Chosen One, and the Spirit descends on him like a dove.

Jesus begins his ministry on the Second Sunday of Ordinary Time (January 16) at the wedding in Cana. He is immersed in the ordinary, the day-to-day events of the people of his time. He is moved by the embarrassment of the bride and groom who are about to run out of wine for the guests. And he does the same even now. He is moved and drawn into the day-to-day activities and difficulties of our lives.

As we journey on through the last couple of weeks of this month of January, we hear Jesus announcing that he has been commissioned to bring the Good News to the poor.

This Third Sunday of Ordinary Time (January 23) is also the Sunday of the Word of God. It also falls within the week of Prayer for Christian Unity.

Then on the last Sunday of this month, the Fourth Sunday of Ordinary Time (January 30), Jesus is rejected by his own people – *no prophet is ever accepted in his own country*.

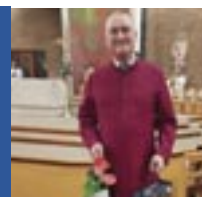
Already there are faint echoes of what is going to happen when Jesus reaches Jerusalem and faces the immensity of the last week of his life. We should take note of our need to be prepared for the coming of Lent. But we will begin our remote preparation for Lent next month, in February.

Yours in blessed hope,

*+ Loy*

## What's Inside

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music, Tim!**  
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Ellen**  
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# In-work poverty 'blights lives' of Britain's children

**The fear of a generation has been laid bare in a new report compiled by the St Vincent de Paul Society (SVP) on the effects of in-work poverty on children and young people.**

The report pulls together existing research on in-work poverty and captures the voices of some of the young people the organisation supports through its Mini-Vinnies groups, as well as those of SVP volunteers, staff and St Vincent's community support centres who help people living in poverty.

"Stealing futures – In-work poverty and its impact on children and young people" shines a light on what it says is one of the most daunting silent issues facing the UK today, with the impact on children and young people often going undetected.

The report quotes an Institute for Public Policy Research study that suggests working poverty has risen under successive governments since 2004.

It also points to a shift over recent decades to a welfare policy that focuses on work as the main route out of poverty. However, the SVP suggests this is only possible if work provides a fair wage and sufficient flexibility.

While unemployment levels are lower than many had expected when the pandemic first hit, the SVP report says: "The reality is that rising housing costs, low wages, unaffordable childcare costs, compounded by growing



The St Vincent de Paul Society is working to tackle poverty in all its forms

**Continued on Page 2**

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NEWS

In-work poverty ‘blights lives’ of children

Continued from Page 1

inflation and the pandemic are leaving a rapidly growing number of working households in poverty.”

At the end of 2020, the Trussell Trust reported a spike in the number of people using food banks for the first time.

The SVP ran a listening exercise across the country to speak to young people aged between seven and 17 and their teachers.

“Growing up in a household experiencing in-work poverty has a deep and lasting impact on children,” said SVP national president Helen O’Shea. “The experiences of the children and young people we heard from were striking.

“Many spoke about the extreme hardship of having to be almost entirely isolated due to Covid restrictions, and how that led to mental health issues, anxiety and a deterioration in their physical health.”

The SVP is calling for more flexible working, an extension of free childcare and the reinstatement of the £20-per-week Universal Credit uplift, as well as the adoption of a Real Living Wage.

“Charity is not the solution to in-work poverty,” said Ms O’Shea. “We need a strong commitment from the government to tackle this hidden crisis, including policies to tackle insecure work, the high cost of childcare and low wages.

“These measures will go some way to improving the quality of life and the opportunities for children and young people, and ultimately the health and prosperity of the nation. In the meantime, the SVP will always be on hand to support people in poverty of any kind.”

- Read about some of the SVP’s important work in our diocese on page 4.

BISHOP TERRY'S JANAUARY ENGAGEMENTS	
8	Attends Monsignor John Marsland’s golden jubilee, Ushaw 6pm
10	Synod Group Meeting via Zoom 7pm
16	Attends Hull University Catholic Society, Hull 8pm
18	Additional Bishops’ Conference Meeting via Zoom 10am Synod Meeting of all parish priests and parish coordinators 7pm
20	Department of Social Justice Meeting at Ecclestone Square or Zoom 11am
24	Northern Church Leaders Meeting 4pm
25	Bishop’s Council – Curial Office 10.30am
27	Meeting of Trustees’ Subcommittee on Education 11am

Archbishop prays for God to ‘make us one’

During an impassioned call for Christian unity, the Archbishop York said praying alongside Bishop Terry in the shrine of St Margaret Clitherow may be the most important moment since his inauguration.

Giving a sermon at choral evensong to mark the centenary of historic talks between Roman Catholics and Anglicans, the Most Reverend Stephen Cottrell recalled last summer’s meeting.

He said: “I sometimes find myself thinking that perhaps the most important thing I have done in my time in office was in the first ten minutes, when with my dear brother, the Bishop of Middlesbrough, we prayed in silence at the shrine of St Margaret Clitherow just around the corner from here.

“And I believe that our cause for unity and our hope to be one will be strengthened, will be revealed if, if I can put it bluntly, we did a bit more of that.”

The service, at York Minster, commemorated the series of five Malines Conversations, which explored possibilities of corporate reunion between the Roman Catholic Church and the Church of England. These discussions paved the way for subsequent ecumenical discussions between Catholics and Anglicans.



Bishop Terry welcomes newly elected 98th Archbishop of York Stephen Cottrell at the shrine of St Margaret Clitherow – Pictures by Duncan Lomax, Ravage Productions

The archbishop said the talks opened a “window of great hopefulness” and the “fresh wind of the Spirit has been blowing in ever since, even though we sometimes find ourselves complaining about the draught, anxious where this wind might blow us.”

And he said such talks must continue because Christian unity is so important, being the cause of Christ himself.

“In his gospel, John says that on the cross, not one bone of Jesus’ body was broken,” he said.

“Since then, we’ve succeeded in breaking just about every bone of Jesus’ body, his Church, and rather arrogantly underestimate the further damage this does to the credibility of our witness, for we are supposed to be ministers of reconciliation.”

He ended by praying: “Put us to shame, Lord, for our divisions. Make us one.”

The celebrations, which were attended by Bishop Terry, included a lecture in the Minster’s Chapter House and choral evensong sung by the Choir of York Minster. Bishop Rowan Williams delivered the lecture and a response followed by Bishop Jean Kockerols.

There was also a presentation of Bishop Williams’ new book The Beginnings of Anglican-Roman Catholic Dialogue, written to mark the centenary of the talks. A further celebration and conference will be held in Mechelen in 2023.



Archbishop Stephen and Bishop Terry praying together

Thank you for the music, Tim!

**Happy retirement to diocesan director of music Tim Harrison, who has stepped down after ten years in the role.**

His final event, Carols by Candlelight at St Mary’s Cathedral, was well attended despite the snow and windy conditions outside.

“It was a beautiful service, with the lights in the cathedral being dimmed and the lighted candles flickering to create a peaceful atmosphere,” said Paul Bowen.

“The joint cathedral and diocesan choirs produced almost an hour of beautiful music, with Grace Oliver returning from the Conservatoire in London for the event and treating the congregation to a wonderful solo.”

Tim graduated in music from University College, Durham, in 1983 and taught in schools for 14 years.

In 1997 he returned to the region to study composition and taught analysis and aural skills at Newcastle University.

In 2002 he was appointed director of music at St Cuthbert’s Seminary, Ushaw College, Durham, before taking up the new post of diocesan director of music in September 2010.

Tim is married to Rachel and they have five children.

“During his ten years in the position, Tim has certainly enhanced the cathedral music, which, with the acoustics of the building, produce some wonderful sound,” said Paul.

Thank you for your service, Tim – we all wish you a happy retirement!



Tim with gifts from the diocese and the cathedral – Photo by Paul Bowen



# Celebrating the work of our founding mothers

**This year, CAFOD reaches its 60th anniversary and we would like to invite you to join us in celebrating our achievements.**

The very first Family Fast Day was started by a group of ladies from the National Board of Catholic Women who, together with the Union of Catholic Mothers and the Catholic Women's League, promoted the new initiative in their parishes.

They were aiming to raise £500 but ended up raising almost £5,000 thanks to the generosity of our wonderful communities.

Elspeth Orchard, one of our founding mothers, said: "We weren't doing anything special, we were just doing what we thought we ought to do, remembering that we are all God's children."

What a legacy they have left us! We are delighted to still be collaborating with Catholic women on a project to support women in Lebanon in our anniversary year and indeed we thank them for their dedication and support over the past 60 years.

There will hopefully be face-to-face events in every diocese and online on Saturday February 5 from 10am to noon to celebrate the initiative of our founding mothers, women who brought together their fellow parishioners to work towards a transformation of the whole world – work that you continue to this day.

I have booked St Bede's Pastoral Centre in York for our event. Places are limited so please email [ccross@cafod.org.uk](mailto:ccross@cafod.org.uk) to book yours soon!

Sister Frances Orchard, Elspeth's daughter, will join us to share her childhood memories of preparing for the very first Family Fast Day. I'm sure she would love to hear yours too!



The founding mothers of CAFOD's Family Fast Day

Our team in Sierra Leone will join us live. We'll reflect on the many lives touched and campaigns won, so come along and join us in person if you can!

## New Year, new opportunities!

**Would you like to help us as we start a new year by joining our team of volunteers and help us continue the legacy started by the intrepid women of 60 years ago?**

If you can spare a few hours, a day or longer we would love to hear from you!

We have a range of different roles to suit people of any age, from speaking at Mass or visiting schools, helping to share our work through online communications or organising fundraising activities or supporting our campaigns and emergencies work.

It's interesting, worthwhile and rewarding and, best of all, you'll be helping to improve the lives of others at the same time.

Call me on 07779 804253 to find out more, or visit [cafod.org.uk/volunteer](http://cafod.org.uk/volunteer).

Help us to make this a real diamond of a year!

**Carol Cross, Community Participation Coordinator**

## Other dates to note while your diaries are open...

**Friday March 11:** Lent Family Fast Day

**Saturday March 26:** Community Walk Against Hunger

**Saturday June 4 at 12.30pm:** Celebration Mass at St George's Cathedral, Southwark with Archbishop John Wilson and Bishop John Arnold followed by reception

**Friday October 7:** Harvest Family Fast Day.

**If you would like to advertise please contact Charlotte Rosbrooke on 07932 248225 or email [charlotter@cathcom.org](mailto:charlotter@cathcom.org)**

## Prince meets survivors of persecution

**Survivors of persecution supported by a leading Catholic charity met the Prince of Wales at an Advent service dedicated to those who suffer for their Christian faith.**

Aid to the Church in Need national director Neville Kyrke-Smith introduced Prince Charles to teenager Frank Marooki from Iraq and Father Mark Odion from Nigeria.

Mr Kyrke-Smith also introduced the prince to key figures committed to supporting the suffering Church including MP Fiona Bruce, the prime minister's special envoy for Freedom of Religion or Belief (FoRB), Mervyn Thomas, chair of the UK FoRB Forum, and Anglican Bishop Philip Mounstephen, who led the 2019 Bishop of Truro's review into Foreign and Commonwealth Office support for persecuted Christians.

Frank Marooki was just eight when he lost both parents and all his siblings when their boat capsized in the Aegean Sea following their escape from Iraq's Nineveh Plains which had been seized by Daesh (ISIS).

Father Mark Odion's home city of Kaduna in northern Iraq has been repeatedly targeted by Islamist militants and in 2001 he lost his uncle, also a priest, during a violent attack on his church and presbytery.

Mr Kyrke-Smith said: "I would like to pay tribute to all those whose example of faith and courage inspires us all – the care and concern that His Royal Highness shows is a huge source of encouragement."



Prince Charles with Aid to the Church in Need's Neville Kyrke-Smith and the Freedom of Religion or Belief forum chair Mervyn Thomas



## NEWS

# SVP continues to serve – but more labourers needed for the vineyard!

**SVP members and conferences have continued to work tirelessly throughout the pandemic, supporting those in our communities who were isolating or in need.**

Throughout lockdown they have helped parishioners keep in touch by deliveries of newsletters, greetings and gifts.

They have delivered food parcels and hot



Fran Dodds is presented with her afternoon tea by St Bernadette's SVP

meals to the housebound, set up food banks and made thousands of phone calls to the lonely.

This was only possible because of the generosity of our parishioners whose donations help to fund our work, so thank you to volunteers and donors alike. You have made such a difference!

Over the past year, we were able to give over £16,000 to those in need in our diocese through the SVP National Covid Fund, now to be renamed the Hardship Fund.

This money was allocated from legacies given to the society. It allowed us to help asylum seekers with shoes and warm clothes, disadvantaged families (identified through schools) with food and white goods and bought a sewing machine for a refugee tailor to make PPE, to name just a few examples.

Reflecting the needs in our area, our diocese received the third-highest allocation from the fund.

As we have been unable to invite new members for over a year, our conferences are now reaching out to you for your support, not just for funds, but for your

time.

The pandemic has taught us to embrace new means of communication as we haven't been able to meet in person.

Many of you have supported your communities and those in need over the last year.

The SVP puts faith into action, enabling members to share prayer, friendship and good works. Alongside this there are many opportunities to deepen faith among like-minded people.

Would you like to find out more? Please contact a member of your local conference or email me at FrancesG@svp.org.uk and I will help to put you in touch.

**Frances Gilchrist, Middlesbrough SVP President**



Nanette Hunt with her afternoon tea



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## Talk examines link between conflict and climate change

The Justice and Peace Commission welcomes Pax Christi England and Wales schools and youth education officer Aisling Griffin as the speaker for its January meeting, which will be held via Zoom.

Since joining Pax Christi, part of Aisling's work has been on the issues of militarism and the arms trade, and she is currently exploring the link between conflict and climate change.

"Despite the undeniable contribution of the world's militaries to climate change, it's a topic that's not often discussed," she says.

"In this interactive, online session we will be exploring how climate change, conflict, military emissions and arms are all interconnected. We will consider what security means in the face of the climate crisis and reflect on how we can respond as people of faith."

The online meeting – entitled "Climate change, arms and conflict: What does security mean in a time of climate crisis?" – will take place on Saturday January 15 between 11am and 12.30pm.

All are welcome. To register, please email Barbara Hungin at [bhungin@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:bhungin@yahoo.co.uk). A Zoom link will be sent out nearer to the date.



Aisling Griffin is exploring the link between conflict and climate change



Canon John Loughlin presents Ellen Holyoake with the Benemerenti medal for her years of dedicated service to the Church



# St Peter's prepares to celebrate 80th birthday

**A Middlesbrough secondary school with a "unique" sporting, cultural and educational heritage is preparing to celebrate its 80th birthday.**

St Peter's Catholic College in South Bank has educated generations of young people, including some famous names from the worlds of sport and music.

Football's Golden Boy Wilf Mannion is one of a host of soccer stars who attended the school, as did Formula 1 engineer Rob Smedley, politician Greg Clark and folk music legend Vin Garbutt.

A major celebration is planned for Thursday March 10 and the school is currently raising awareness of the event throughout the local area, as well as those who have strong connections to the school.

The event will involve a liturgy, reception and opportunity to tour the school and perhaps relive old memories.

"St Peter's Catholic College will come together to look back on our rich heritage, celebrate just how far we have come and look forward to what the future holds," said head of school Stephanie Garthwaite.

"As soon as you walk into St Peter's you're aware of the school's unique heritage, and it's something we're very proud to be celebrating in this way.

"Invitations are currently going out to people linked to the school, but we also want to make sure we reach past members of the St Peter's family too.

"It's so important that we get the word out there and make this a real celebration for the people of South Bank and the surrounding area.

"We'd like as many members of the school family as possible to join us for these celebrations."

St Peter's has been transformed in recent years by improvements including a new fitness suite and changing facilities, which

accommodate 32 boys and 32 girls and include showers, toilets and disabled facilities.

Other enhancements in an ambitious programme include a new exhibition centre, along with a comprehensive facelift to the outside and interior of the famous building.

The school also boasts a brand-new Virtual Reality suite – one of the first of its kind in the UK – taking the school into the future.

To find out more, visit [stpeters.npcat.org.uk/80th](http://stpeters.npcat.org.uk/80th)



The new Virtual Reality suite at St Peter's



St Peter's Catholic College head of school Stephanie Garthwaite and executive headteacher Michael Burns – Photo by Chris Booth

# SAVE THE DATE

## THURSDAY 10 MARCH 2022



For all members of the St Peter's Catholic College, South Bank community.

# PAST. PRESENT. FUTURE.

It's time to celebrate just how far we have come...

All members of the St Peter's Catholic College family are welcome to join with us for our celebrations. To find out more and express your interest in attending, please visit our website - [stpeters.npcat.org.uk](http://stpeters.npcat.org.uk), or contact us on 01642 453462 or [enquiries@stpeters.npcat.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@stpeters.npcat.org.uk) before Friday 21 January 2022.





## NEWS

# Synodal process picks up pace for New Year

**Parishes throughout the diocese are seeing in the New Year by “kickstarting” the synodal process.**

We recently emailed parish priests and parish coordinators to ask how they are getting along and if they needed any help or advice.

Some parishes have already begun the synodal process while others are preparing to get things underway.

Just a reminder of the questions Pope Francis has asked us to think, pray and reflect about:

***A synodal Church, in announcing the Gospel, journeys together.***

***How is this journeying together happening today in your local church?***

***What steps does the Spirit invite us to take to grow in our journeying together?***

We are asked to remember that our parish consultations are not to be about those who are right and those who are wrong. It's helpful to frame our parish consultations in three phases...

1. Recall our experiences: Where do we find ourselves now? The world has come through a profound period. Experiences of isolation, sickness and death and not being able to grieve as one would have, contributed to the anxiety of life. There has also been an outpouring of a generosity of spirit, gratitude, care, innovation and creativity. What strengths and weaknesses have emerged in your lives and communities? What has been the experience of the touch of God? What challenges and vulnerabilities have been exposed?

2. Re-read those experiences, open to the inspiration of the Holy Spirit: Look at them in greater depth, relating them to the Synod themes of communion, participation and mission.

3. Gather the fruits together: The third part of the process will be to gather the fruits of the discussion considering what needs to change to make the Church more missionary. What has the last two years taught us about journeying together as a Church?

Pope Francis tells us that those engaged in this process need to speak with *parrhesia*, drawing upon the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, speaking with candour, directness and sincerity, tempered by freedom, truth and charity.

“In other words, speaking with *parrhesia* necessarily requires the virtue of prudence. This enables us to see, in any given moment of life, what is virtuous and what is not, and how to embrace what is good and avoid what is evil.”

Some parishes' responses so far...

*We introduced the Synod preparations in our parish on the feast of Christ the King, with a short introductory talk at each Mass. The response has been overwhelmingly positive, and we are excited and energised to start the process this month.*

*We have conducted two sessions in accordance with your plan for spiritual conversation – the first was a test, one with the parochial parish council and then one with the wider parish.*

*We're beginning to invite folks to our first sessions. We'll then go from there into the New Year.*

*I gave a short talk at last weekend's Masses, explaining what the Synod was about. During Advent, I and our other parish coordinator will be available after Mass.*

*We invited parishioners to come and talk to us in the first instance, and we will also have a "Synod suggestion box" for those who prefer to put their thoughts in writing or who wish to remain anonymous.*

*Our three reps and I have met and have published a lengthy front page on the weekly newsletter. We have alerted parishioners that there will be some meetings after Christmas for parishioners.*

*In this small parish, we had meetings of eight people and five people. Both meetings went well and were full of the Holy Spirit. One of the parish co-ordinators ably chaired both meetings and another took the minutes. We are hoping to have another meeting in January.*

These are just a few examples of what is taking shape across the diocese. If you haven't started, it's not too late. This is an opportunity for us and our diocese to be enlivened by the Holy Spirit. This process can help breathe new life into our parish communities.

Thank you to all those who are working so hard to get the Synodal process going. If you have any questions or require any resources, please email Canon Derek Turnham at [derektturnham@rcdmidd.org.uk](mailto:derektturnham@rcdmidd.org.uk) or Deacon David Cross at [adultformation@rcdmidd.org.uk](mailto:adultformation@rcdmidd.org.uk).

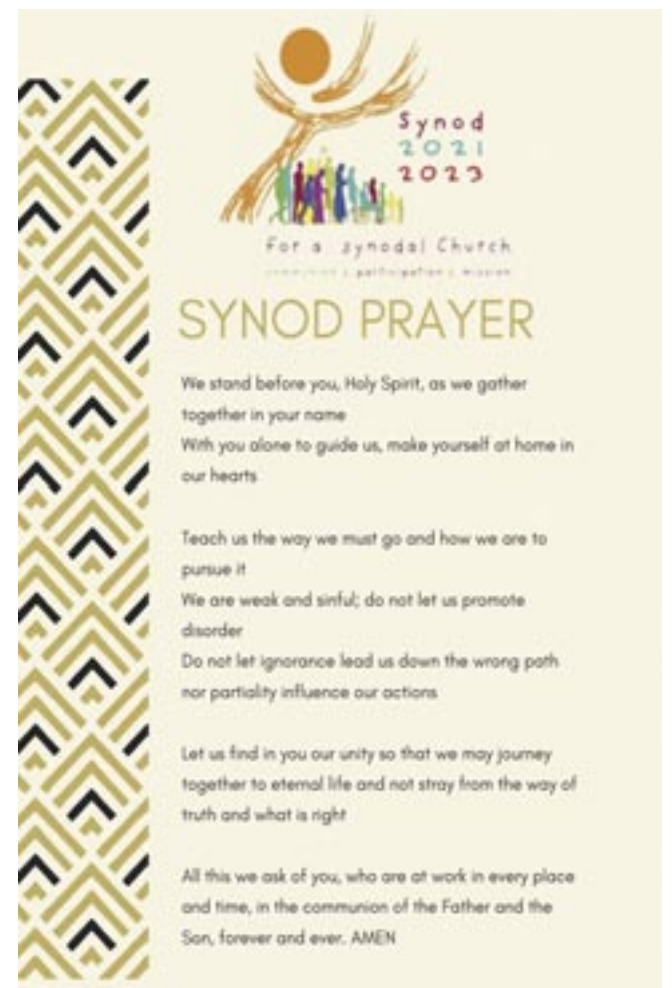
The deadline for returning your parish feedback pro forma is Wednesday March 2. Please return your completed pro forma either to Canon Derek Turnham, Curial Offices, 50a The Avenue, Linthorpe, Middlesbrough TS5 6QT or [adultformation@rcdmidd.org.uk](mailto:adultformation@rcdmidd.org.uk).

Please pray for the success of the Synodal process.

**Deacon David Cross,  
Adult Formation Coordinator**



Deacon David Cross



## A Letter From Madonna House – “It’s OK – I’m not mad!”



**It was one of the most beautiful examples of forgiveness I've ever seen: a three-year-old boy had just sleepily shuffled into the kitchen, still dressed in his pyjamas.**

Waiting for him was a very serious mother with something to confess. She had eaten all his Halloween candy the previous evening.

Shocked, he whipped around to look at where his stash had been. Sure enough – it was gone! The look of incomprehension deepened when his mother continued, “I’m sorry – I was just really hungry last night, and there was nothing else to eat”.

The little tyke went over to the fridge and pulled open the massive door to verify that it was still full of food.

“You should have eaten this,” he said. Again, his mother apologised. The child mulled over the injustice for just a moment longer, then came up to his mum, put his hands on her face, smiled and said, “It’s ok – I’m not mad at you.” Probably words learned from his mother.

This was teasing from his mother and, of

course, she hadn’t eaten his candy. But how beautifully it backlit the generous spirit of this little boy. He couldn’t understand why his mother would take his treasure, and he registered his complaint, but let that go as love for his mum gained the victory.

This was a YouTube clip that someone sent me, and while I don’t like the trick played on the little boy, it does remind me of how God tests our hearts to reveal what is there. With this lad, the deepest layer in his heart was forgiveness, love and trust in his mother.

I wish I was more like him. When God “takes away” something I’ve treasured, I lodge many complaints, employing every bit of logic I can dredge up, to show why he shouldn’t do that. I may weep or rage or sulk before I finally confront my fundamental choice: will I believe that God is capricious and hurtful, or can I trust that his action is for a greater good – for me and for others? Can I remember his merciful love, and trust in his goodness? How quickly can I return to the ground of my being, that God is God? He loves beyond my comprehension. Whatever

he does or allows is for love.

I suspect that many of us felt like God took away our “Halloween candy” in these past two years – our travels, unencumbered visits with family and friends, unquestioned health and security, the wide variety of engagements and endless possibilities.

Sometimes it takes suffering or deprivation to bring us to profound gratitude for the true gifts of God – our faith, the beauty of our sacramental Church, the love we share with others that cannot be taken from us. And perhaps the greatest gift is a growing awareness that we live and move and have our being in the tender loving mercy of our God.

Unlike the Halloween candy, this faith can never be stolen or consumed. I’m just sorry to admit that it takes me a lot longer than this sweet boy, before I put my hands on God’s face and say, “It’s ok – I’m not mad. I trust you.”

**Cheryl Ann Smith**



# Religious gather for Synod preparation meeting

The religious of the diocese were invited to Thicket Carmelite Monastery, York, for a day of reflection and sharing in preparation for the Synod.

The Thicket community were joined by representatives from the Bar Convent, Stanbrook Abbey, the Marists, the Corpus Christi Carmelite Sisters and the Carmelite Third Order. The discussions were introduced and chaired by Sister Ann Stafford CJ.

Canon Jerry Twomey, the Episcopal Vicar for Religious, also took part in the day and celebrated a Votive Mass for the needs of the Church. It is hoped that there will be another similar gathering in the spring.



The Synod day of reflection at Thicket Carmelite Monastery, York – Photo by Johan Bergström-Allen

# Diplomat shares experiences of the Holy See



Former UK ambassador to the Holy See Sally Axworthy MBE

**Former UK ambassador to the Holy See Sally Axworthy MBE shared experiences of her five years in Rome during a talk at York's Bar Convent.**

Sally – who served in the role from 2016 to 2021 – was responsible for the relationship between the UK and the Vatican and hosted British ministers and dignitaries when they visited Rome, sometimes taking them to meet the pope.

She told the audience that the Canonisation of St John Henry Newman in 2019 was a highlight of her tenure with guests including the Prince of Wales, who had made a memorable speech about Newman's role in reconciling Anglicans and Catholics.

World religions were also invited to Rome to discuss climate change and their involvement in COP26.

The presentation featured slides of Sally's time in Rome, including her pilgrimage walking part of the Way of St Francis in northern Italy with her daughter and two dogs.

Before returning to the UK, Sally decided to visit all the station churches in Rome each day during Lent, as the pope does, followed by visits to Assisi and the Franciscan monasteries.

Sally also said she had visited the motherhouse in Rome of the Congregation of Jesus (CJs), the order who live in the convent. Each year she arranged a party on behalf of the Queen, and the CJs had lent her their gardens as a venue.

She then learned about the CJs' founder Mary Ward, who had made her way to Rome

on foot in the 17th century to ask the pope to recognise the order.

Having become interested in the order, Sally had especially enjoyed staying with the CJ community in York and visiting the chapel and museum with members of the community.

The talk was arranged by the Union of Catholic Mothers, the National Board of Catholic Women and the Newman Association.

Sarah Sheils and Kath Stubbs

## Dates for your diary

**The RCIA Retreat Day will be on Saturday February 5 from 10.30am to 3pm at Our Lady's, Gale Lane, Acomb, York YO24 3AE. The day will be led by Father Tony Lester.**

Please book by emailing Deacon David Cross at [adultformation@rcdmidd.org.uk](mailto:adultformation@rcdmidd.org.uk) or by calling 01642 850505 extension 241.

The Rite of Election will be in the cathedral on Sunday March 6 at 3pm. If you have anyone who wishes to be received into full communion with the Catholic Church at Easter, please contact Deacon David Cross with their details.

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## SCHOOLS

## Sweet taste of success for South Bank school

**St Margaret Clitherow's Catholic Primary School in South Bank is enjoying the sweet taste of success thanks to the incredible generosity of the local community.**

The school raised an impressive £1,195 at an outdoor Macmillan Coffee Morning – but, as headteacher Clare McNicholas explained, that's just the latest in a long line of events that show just how special South Bank is.

"We've been trying to get back to normal from September onwards and the Macmillan Coffee Morning was the first event since Covid that we've been able to invite our community and families to," said Miss McNicholas.

"People donated the cakes and then came to buy them all back! Some of the mams and dads couldn't stay long but they still came and spent so much money on cakes and then gave the children money as well.

"For the children, it was a lovely opportunity to come outside into the sunshine and buy a cake and have a drink."

Miss McNicholas wasn't at all surprised at

the big-hearted response from parents.

"It's just a phenomenal community," she said. "Anything we ask, our whole school community is just so supportive.

"At our nativity we had donation baskets raising money for Zoe's Place, in Normanby, which is such a worthwhile charity.

"Last year we raised over £600 from the Poppy Appeal and we've just raised £424.20 on Children in Need Day. Our Mission Together collection, which we hold during Lent rather than Advent, is always well supported and for our harvest festival, the children brought so much food for our local food bank.

"The school and staff feel so privileged to serve such a magnificent, generous community. As a former pupil of the school, I'm bursting with pride to be in the position I am."

Last summer NPCAT installed a state-of-the-art MUGA sports pitch outside, which has made a huge difference to PE and sport lessons and at playtimes.



**Generous families raised £1,195 by baking cakes and then buying them back at St Margaret Clitherow's Macmillan Coffee Morning**

## Reorganisation creates country's largest Catholic schools' trust

**The diocese has announced plans to create the country's largest trust of Catholic schools.**

St Margaret Clitherow Catholic Academy Trust (SMCCAT), which operates 17 schools in York and North Yorkshire, will be harmonised into Nicholas Postgate Catholic Academy Trust (NPCAT), which runs 27 schools across Teesside and the north of the diocese.

Another school, All Saints in York, will also become part of the reformed trust, taking the total to 45 schools under the new organisation.

The move comes after Bishop Terry

commissioned an independent review of the three regional Catholic academy trusts in the diocese.

The review, while highlighting the significant successes of NPCAT, challenges the ability of the existing trust structures to deliver excellent Catholic education for all the children and young people our schools serve.

The diocese then commissioned a second independent report, which confirmed the findings of the initial review.

"I am aware that these changes may bring some anxiety and concern," said Bishop

Terry. "However, they are necessary to ensure that all our diocesan schools have access to the same high levels of strategic leadership, governance and high-quality Catholic education to ensure that my vision for my schools is lived out every day, across the diocese.

"The diocese has proven experience of bringing trusts together. We will ensure the process is carried out with transparency and openness, with appropriate time for discussion and consultation to allow the smooth harmonisation of the two trusts to take place."

Bishop Terry has written to both trusts asking them to begin harmonising their work and the Regional Schools Commissioner has been asked to support this process, which will be overseen by diocesan director of schools Kevin Duffy.

Once the 17 SMCCAT schools have transferred to NPCAT, the SMCCAT company will close.

St Cuthbert's Catholic Academy Trust, which runs eight schools in the Hull area, is unaffected by the reorganisation.

## LOURDES

## Register your interest in Lourdes 2022

We are asking you to register your interest in our 2022 pilgrimage, including hospitalité helpers, supported pilgrims and everyone who wishes to visit the shrine as part of the pilgrimage.

**Supported pilgrims:**  
headofhospitalite@rcdmidd.org.uk

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headbrancardier@rcdmidd.org.uk

**Handmaids:**  
headhandmaid@rcdmidd.org.uk

**Nurses/doctors:**  
doctor@rcdmidd.org.uk or  
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thelombards@hotmail.com

**Pilgrims:**  
pilgrimagedirector@rcdmidd.org.uk

Alternatively, write to Lourdes Pilgrimage Director, Curial Office, 50a The Avenue, Middlesbrough TS5 6QT

## Lourdes stalwart Mary was a 'good and kind' person

**CHRIS CUTHILL looks back on the life of Mary O'Brien, who was well known in Hull's Catholic community and served on the Hull Lourdes committee for many years...**

**Mary O'Brien (nee Kerins) was born on September 24 1925, in the Kerries, County Kerry.**

The family moved to Blennerville, near Tralee, when she was very young and there she lived and worked until she met and married Gerard O'Brien, from Hull, in July 1953.

Mary and Gerard settled in Hull, where son Liam was born in 1956. For many years Mary taught at the Gregg School of Shorthand and Typing. She eventually opened her own business school, which she ran very successfully until her retirement in 1990.

Both Mary and Gerard were deeply involved in the Catholic life of the city. Mary was a founder member of the Hull Lourdes Committee in the early 1970s and stayed on the committee until advancing years forced her to resign only a couple of years ago.

She served in turn as chair, secretary and treasurer, and was involved in all kinds of fundraising events.

Lourdes was close to her heart, and she travelled on the diocesan pilgrimage several times as a handmaid. Her final pilgrimage was with Gerard when he was seriously ill, shortly before he died in 2005.

As well as her involvement with Lourdes,

she was a founder member of the Marist Social Club, honorary secretary of the St Vincent's Social Club, secretary of the University of Hull Catholic Chaplaincy and secretary of the Marist School Parent Teacher Association.

Mary was a good and kind person, full of fun and great company. Mary and Gerard's house in Cottingham Road was warm and welcoming and was the scene of many memorable parties over the years.

She was proud of being Irish and loved singing the Rose of Tralee at every opportunity. She died peacefully at home on Tuesday November 23 and her funeral took place at Our Lady of Lourdes and St Peter Chanel Church on Monday December 13. She will be greatly missed.

Mary, may the Irish hills caress you

May her lakes and rivers bless you

May the luck of the Irish enfold you

May the blessings of St Patrick behold you

\*The Lourdes committee was sad to hear of the death of dedicated brancardier Tommy Wright, from York, on November 15.

Tommy was a great servant to the pilgrimage who also instilled his great love for Lourdes into his family. Tommy and his family, including his daughter, Elaine, who is one of our youth leaders, are in our prayers at this difficult time.

We were also saddened by the recent deaths

of long-serving Lourdes nurse Sheila McReddie and Mary Brown, from Hull, who travelled with us to accompany one of our supported pilgrims.

Our Lady of Lourdes pray for them



**Gerard and Mary O'Brien, who were both deeply involved in Hull's Catholic life**



# How you can join campaign to defeat asylum bill

**The human cost of the perilous journeys many migrants and refugees make to seek safety was brought home recently by the tragic loss of life in the English Channel.**

"The terrible loss of so many lives in the Channel is a tragic summons to action," said Cardinal Vincent Nichols.

"This event illustrates graphically both the ruthless evil of the traffickers and the desperation of those trying to escape poverty, conflict or persecution in search of a better life.

"Everyone is a child of God, with an innate dignity and worth. Focused international cooperation, safe routes to sanctuary and joint efforts to tackle poverty are all needed in the face of a global flood of desperate humanity."

In international law, it is legal for anyone to seek asylum in a country, such as the UK, which is a signatory to the 1951 Refugee Convention.

In an address, the pope reminded us that being Christian is about having a "heart that sees" – that sees as Jesus sees, that is present where Jesus is present, above all in those who are vulnerable.

He encouraged us to see those seeking sanctuary as children of God "to be welcomed, protected, supported and integrated."

The Nationality and Borders Bill, currently making its way through parliament, would overhaul our asylum system to make it much more difficult to seek asylum in the UK.

The bill would create a two-tier system which discriminated against refugees depending on their method of entry to the country.

In a letter to the Home Secretary last year, Bishop Paul McAleenan, lead bishop for migrants and refugees for the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales (CBEW), and Bishop Willian Nolan, the Bishop of Galloway, made it clear they could not support any such proposal.

"We oppose any move to treat differently those forced to risk their lives or make difficult journeys to reach safety and those who are selected for organised resettlement routes," they wrote.

The bill seeks to expand the use of detention-like out-of-town centres, where those seeking asylum would be cut off from community support.

It also seeks to raise the threshold of proof and deepen a culture of suspicion and disbelief that often greets asylum seekers. Finally, it does not seek to create safe and managed routes for those seeking asylum, which plays into the hands of the criminal gangs who traffic and exploit vulnerable people seeking safety.

Two member organisations of the Caritas Social Action Network (CSAN), the Saint Vincent de Paul Society and the Jesuit Refugee Service UK, have produced a campaign toolkit, eight things you should know about the Nationality and Borders Bill and actions you can take to change it.

This resource examines the bill in the light of sacred Scripture and Catholic Social Teaching and proposes practical ways the Catholic community can express its concerns.

You can find a short version of the toolkit on the Diocese of Middlesbrough website News section, together with a link to the full version.



A prayer vigil for refugees outside Westminster Cathedral – © Mazur/catholicnews.org.uk

The toolkit suggests four ways you can advocate for refugees:

1. Write to your MP to express your concerns about the bill and call for a just and person-centred asylum system which respects the dignity of the person. The toolkit includes a template letter. With the Bill currently at its third reading, there is an urgent need.
2. Share the toolkit with others.
3. Welcome a refugee or asylum seeker. The Community Sponsorship Scheme, pioneered by Catholic parishes, has enabled over 350

communities to resettle a refugee family. Contact [sean.ryan@csan.org.uk](mailto:sean.ryan@csan.org.uk) to find out how you can get involved.

4. Pray for refugees.

CSAN is an agency of the CBEW dedicated to tackling the causes of poverty, promoting justice and restoring dignity. It has 54 members, including the Caritas agencies of 17 of the dioceses of England and Wales. For more information, [csan.org.uk](http://csan.org.uk) or email [admin@csan.org.uk](mailto:admin@csan.org.uk).

## From the Archives



### 40 Years Ago

*(From January 1982 Catholic Voice)*

Councillor Arthur Carter, Chairman of Cleveland County Council, cordially invites the Civic and Religious Communities in Cleveland (North and South of the Tees) to join him in a UNITED ACT OF WORSHIP in the Town Hall, Middlesbrough, on January 20th 1982.

All are welcome so please make an effort to attend. That this invitation comes from the Civic Leaders is significant; let us show our appreciation by responding to it. The theme for Unity Week 1982 is: May all find their home in you O Lord.

### 90 Years Ago

*(From 1932 Almanac & Directory for the Diocese of Middlesbrough)*

The new school of St Patrick's, Thornaby-on-Tees was erected last year at a total cost of £9,200, exclusive of the site, which cost £590. It is situated amid beautiful rural settings at the south end of Westbury Street and Lane House Road. Designed by Mr Kitching F.R.I.B.A., architect of Middlesbrough, and built by Mr Rodgers, Darlington, the school accommodates 400 senior children. There are eight spacious classrooms, together with three staff-rooms, a science hall, art room, cookery room, and handicraft centre. An open verandah encircles the rear of the building which gives access to all classrooms. The school was blessed and declared formally open on Saturday, October 10th, by the Lord Bishop of Middlesbrough.

David Smallwood

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NEWS

# Environment Corner

## Building a better future together

In *Laudato Si'*, Pope Francis invites us to “discover what each of us can do” as we build a better future together.

Responding to the encyclical's call means embracing new ways of living as our growing awareness of the connections between all things is translated to concrete action.

The *Laudato Si'* action platform was launched in November and is being continually developed.

It offers resources, concrete practical expertise and suggestions for actions that support progress towards the seven *Laudato Si'* Goals. The resources are rich and plentiful, recognising that different groups need to take on their own identity.

They include

- An online course in “Greening Your Church”
- Different reflections and templates for organising a day of prayer
- Bidding prayers
- Bible studies
- Resources from the Jesuits and Franciscans and
- A “Plastics Toolbox” to educate and equip us to act against plastics.

The resources can all be used in our churches, communities and other groups.

One attractive suggestion is to start a *Laudato Si'* Circle. These are groups that meet regularly to deepen their relationship with God as Creator and all members of creation.

Together, they pray with and for creation, reflect on their ongoing ecological conversion and take action.

To quote from the platform website: “This road will challenge us, and the ideas and support of our sisters and brothers in Christ will strengthen us along the way. ‘We were made for love,’ and deeper relationships will nourish us wherever the Holy Spirit leads” (LS 58).

Visit the *Laudato Si'* platform at [laudatosiactionplatform.org](http://laudatosiactionplatform.org).

For more about forming a *Laudato Si'* Circle, visit [laudatosimovement.org/act/laudato-si-circles](http://laudatosimovement.org/act/laudato-si-circles).

Barbara Hungin



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Copy and photographs for inclusion in the *Catholic Voice* should be sent to: The Editor, Middlesbrough Diocesan Catholic Voice, Curial Offices, 50a The Avenue, Linthorpe, Middlesbrough, TS5 6QT.

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**Deadline January 7 for our February edition.**

Where possible please send articles in Word and photographs as jpegs. Please confirm when you send in your photographs that those who appear in them have given their permission for publication.



## NEWS

# Canon Law and Canada

**FATHER PETER TAYLOR** tells us why he's experiencing an increasingly cold Canadian winter, with heavy snowfalls on the way...

When Bishop Terry asked me to go and study for a Licentiate (an ecclesiastical Master's level course) in Canon Law (the law code of the Church), almost every person I told asked me the same questions: "Why Canada?" and "What's Canon Law?"

When we think of Christianity and law, probably the first thing that comes to mind is Our Lord's repeated critiques of the Scribes and the Pharisees, the expression of being pharisaical is never far behind.

Our Lord repeatedly tries to show to the Scribes and Pharisees that their lives, which were centred on the Ten Commandments, and which were then expanded to encompass every aspect of Jewish life, were becoming detached from the purpose of the law: sanctification.

The Lord showed their hypocrisy, their claiming to live lives centred on God but using the expanded law they had become self-serving.

This might make it sound like the law is a bad thing and that we don't need it now, but that's not at all what Jesus said.

*"Do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the prophets; I have come not to abolish but to fulfil."* (Matthew 5:17).

Indeed, if you want to know what it looks like to see the law of God in action, look at the way Jesus himself lived.

The law – the true Law – was God-given. God gave the law to Moses on Mount Sinai for a reason – to guide the people of Israel to live as he desires them to live. To place God as their central focus:

*"You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind." This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: "You shall love your neighbour as yourself." On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets."* (Matthew 22:37-40)

The law is to guide us to love God and to love our neighbour, to guide us in the salvation of souls. This desire is contained in the Code of Canon Law, the collection of the laws of the Church promulgated by Pope St John Paul II in 1983.

The very last Canon (law) says *"...the salvation of souls, which must always be the supreme law in the Church, is to be kept before one's eyes"* (Canon 1757).

The law of the Church, far from holding us back towards antiquated notions of right and wrong, instead guides us and frees us to give a true "Yes" to God.

It can help lift people from the most difficult of circumstances through a practical application of the mercy of God, through the work of the diocesan tribunal.

It keeps us in unity with the Church throughout the world, that even here in the Diocese of Middlesbrough we are united with the Holy Father and every Catholic, no matter where they are. It guides us so that we can celebrate the sacraments worthily,



Father Peter Taylor is greeted by Canon Michael Loughlin after his ordination in St Mary's Cathedral – Photo by Chris Booth

which have been handed down to us through the centuries from the time of the apostles.

It protects our access to the spiritual goods of the Church so that we may grow in holiness and work in unity, and synodally, for the spreading of the divine message of salvation.

The Law of the Church shapes every aspect of our lives as Catholics, even if we don't realise it.

It's because of all this I find myself sitting in classes, in an increasingly chilly Canadian winter, with several feet of snow expected (incidentally, I'm in Canada as it's one of the few faculties that offer the course in English, not just because of a fondness for maple syrup!), to learn about this important part of the Church's life and ministry.

## Vatican launches #IamChurch campaign for people with disabilities

**The Vatican's Dicastery for Laity, Family and Life has launched a campaign dedicated to people living with disabilities.**

Tagged #IamChurch, the campaign will feature five videos containing the testimonies of Christians living with disabilities from different parts of the world who recount their experience of faith and affirm, "I am Church!"

In his message to persons with disabilities on the occasion of the international day dedicated to them, Pope Francis noted that Baptism gives each one of us, "without exclusion or discrimination, the possibility of exclaiming, 'I am Church!'"

Echoing the Pope's words, the Dicastery for Laity, Family and Life launched the videos, which were being released weekly from the start of last month, to highlight the contribution that persons with disabilities offer to the ecclesial community each day.

The videos will illustrate the work of

evangelisation carried out by some young deaf people in Mexico, a monastery in France where several nuns with Down's syndrome live out their vocation and a group of young Italians with disabilities who participate in World Youth Day celebrations, among others.

"We are convinced that if we are able to listen attentively to the voices of our sisters and brothers with disabilities, the ecclesial community will come out truly enriched," said Gabriella Gambino, undersecretary of the dicastery.

The campaign comes during the *Amoris Laetitia* Family Year launched by Pope Francis last March to celebrate five years since the publication of the post-synodal apostolic exhortation, *Amoris Laetitia*, on the beauty and joy of love in the family.

The year-long celebration will conclude on June 26, on the occasion of the Tenth World Meeting of Families in Rome.

The videos are made by Poti Pictures, the film division of Coop Soc Il Cenacolo, the first social film production company in the world that makes commercials, short films and feature films with actors with intellectual disabilities.



A baby is held up to Pope Francis during a general audience at the Vatican – Photo © Mazur/catholicnews.org.uk

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NEWS

# Walter’s Christmas

ANTHEA DOVE presents a heartwarming story as we reflect on the Christmas season...

There are five children in the Brown family: Matthew and Mark, twins aged ten, Mary and Elizabeth, also twins, who are eight, and Walter John, who is four and named after his grandad.

Sadly, just before Walter was born, his granny died, and now Grandad lives with the family. All the children are excited because it will soon be Christmas. The family are not rich, and they will not be receiving any big presents.

Today, Grandad is looking as excited as any of the children. This is because he has a friend called Joe, who is a forester, and he has just stopped his big wagon outside the Brown family’s front door.

Everyone ran out and watched as Dad and Grandad and Grandad’s friend managed to unload a very big Christmas tree and somehow squeeze it through the front door. Grandad had invited Joe in for a cup of tea, when suddenly Matt and Mark ran up to them.

“Please, Mister Joe,” said Matt, panting because they had been running. “Please, if we give you our pocket money that we saved, could you plant another tree in place of this one?”

Joe smiled.  
“How much have you got, son?” he asked.  
“Four pounds and 73 pence,” said Mark.  
Joe smiled some more.

“I reckon that would just about do it,” he said. “Yes, I’ll find you a fine little tree to plant.”  
Grandad was puzzled.  
“But weren’t you two saving up for Christmas?”  
“Grandad!” said Matt. “Don’t you know about climate change?”  
“Grandad!” said Mark. “It’s the best thing us kids can do, to plant trees!”  
“Well,” said Grandad. “I like to think I’m a wise old man, but I’m learning fast. Thanks, boys. More tea, Joe?”



All Walter wanted for Christmas was a crib, like this one showing the three wise men visiting the child Jesus

Mum was covering an old bucket with red and green paper, and now it stood ready in a corner of the living room. She asked the children to go upstairs and play there until she called them.  
The wait seemed very long, but at last their father called: “You can come down now.”  
They scrambled down the stairs, nearly falling over one another.  
“Now come and see what Mum and I have done,” said Mr Brown.  
They all piled into the living room and stopped dead, astonished.  
“It’s stunning!” said Matt.  
“I can’t believe it!” said Mark.  
“It’s so, so beautiful,” said Mary.

And Lizzie said: “It’s brilliant!”  
“I’ve seen beautiful Christmas trees in the big shops,” said Mary, “but nothing like this. And the one at school is nowhere near as wonderful.”  
“Oh, thank you, thank you, Mum and Dad,” they chorused.  
“It’s your grandad you have to thank,” said their mother. “He’s been collecting these magical Christmas tree decorations all his life.”  
Just then, the door opened and Grandad himself stood there. The children crowded around him, thanking him and hugging him. Grandad smiled, looking at the tree and then around the room.  
“Where is young Walter?” he asked  
Where was he? His mother spotted him first. Walter was sitting in a corner, behind the tree, sucking his thumb, something he hadn’t done for months.  
“Oh, Walter, love, whatever’s the matter?”  
Walter began to cry.  
“I’m sorry Mum, the tree is beautiful, but I wanted a crib.”  
The other children began to speak: “A crib? But why? We’ve never had a crib...”  
“Well, that’s a pity!” said a loud voice.  
Everyone looked at Grandad.  
“I have a crib in the attic,” he said. “It’s 75 years old. If you will help me, Walter, we can make it as good as new, and we can ask Mary and Lizzie to make us some fresh swaddling clothes for the baby, Jesus.”  
That year, there weren’t many Christmas presents in the Browns’ house, but all through his life, that would be the Christmas that Walter loved best.

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